IN THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheets of drawings include a legend designating the drawings as Prior Art. These sheets, which include Figs. 1-4, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1-4.

Attachments: Two Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated September 2, 2011.

Claims 1-20 remain pending in the application after entry of this response. New claims 9-20 have been added. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed herein.

Drawings

The Examiner states that Figures 1-4 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art--.

Applicant has amended the drawings to include the legend "Prior Art."

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Applicant has amended the claims for clarification.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's allegedly admitted prior art in view of *Heinz et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,305,512). The Examiner states that the flexible metal washers 229 taught in the admitted prior art is "viewed" as a blow-off piston, and the flexible washers cover the passageways in the same manner as a first position in engagement with said at least one passage and a second position removed from said at least one passage. The Examiner admits that the alleged admitted prior art fails to disclose an intensifier piston, but the Examiner states that *Heinz* teaches a damping assembly including an intensifier 43.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Although the intensifier 43 taught by Heinz has a name similar to the "intensifier piston" recited in the claims, the intensifier 43 does not perform in a manner required by claim 1. *Heinz* discloses a pressure operated valve having a valve body 39 connected to a pressure intensifier 43. The pressure intensifier 43 is supported between two spring elements 59, 61. A first end of the valve body 39 is the inflow face 87 and a second end of the valve body 39 is the pressure chamber 69, which is connected a fluid pressure source. The closing force acting on the valve body 39 is the combination of the control pressure in the pressure chamber 69 and the resultant spring force of the two spring elements 59, 61. (See col. 6, lns. 43-46). If the pressure on the inflow face 87 of the valve body 39 ("opening force") is greater than the closing force, then the valve body 39 is lifted to open the outflow openings 37, thereby allowing the damping medium to flow into the balancing chamber 19 via the outflow openings 37. Thus, *Heinz* merely teaches a pressure operated valve configured to control flow through the outflow openings 37. The source 69 is independent of any operational pressure controlled by the "intensifier" 43 and further is static subject to independent adjustment and merely represents a control pressure. The valve of Heinz is simply a spring biased valve subject to an additive and independent adjustable control pressure. *Heinz* does not disclose a valve which generates a resistance force to said fluid flow wherein said resistance force varies according to an amount of force communicated to said valve by said first pressure source. There is, therefore, no motivation or suggestion that the pressure in the pressure chamber 69 of *Heinz* can be used to move the washer 229 of the allegedly admitted prior art. Consequently, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach or suggest a valve which generates a resistance force to said fluid flow wherein said resistance force varies according to an amount of force communicated to said valve by said first pressure source, as recited in claim 1.

Also, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach or suggest a valve which generates a resistance force to said fluid flow wherein said resistance force varies according to an amount of force communicated to said valve by said first pressure source, as recited in claim 17.

Further, the references, neither alone nor in combination, teach nor suggest generating an intensified pressure at a second end of the intensifier piston in response to the force applied at the first end; and moving a blow-off piston to close fluid flow through the first passage in response to the intensified pressure, as recited in claim 18.

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Heinz and further in view of *Curnutt* (U.S. Patent No. 5,190,126).

Applicant believes claim 8 is allowable for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 1.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

/William B. Patterson/

William B. Patterson
Registration No. 34,102
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant